

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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*****For Immediate Release*****

Date: Feb. 13, 2009
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BOGUS AMBER ALERT ON THE MOVE

Police and advocates for child safety are warning that a bogus AMBER alert seems to be making its way around the country again. They're asking the public to not forward unverified AMBER Alerts by text message or other e-mail.

The most recent message seemed similar to one which was reported last year. It reads "A 7 yr old girl was taken by a man driving a newer silver truck. The license plate reads 72b381 please please pass on. " There are no known AMBER Alert activations containing that information.

"The best way to find out about AMBER Alerts is to sign up to receive them directly from the official web site," said Marty Knorr, AMBER Alert Coordinator for the Washington State Patrol. "If you think your friends need to know, encourage them to sign up as well."

In Washington, official AMBER Alerts can be found at www.washingtonamberalert.com.

Official AMBER Alert messages are geographically targeted and contain all the necessary information pertaining to the child abductions, including where they were issued and contact information for the investigating law enforcement agency. They will also be followed by a cancellation message when the child has been recovered.

Often forwarded messages that appear to be or even claim to be "AMBER Alerts," but do not contain the necessary information are hoaxes. Even well intentioned citizens, who attempt to formulate their own alerts and forward them, can unwittingly create confusion and a lack of integrity in the system.

The AMBER Alert program is a highly successful nationwide effort that has resulted in 443 children being safely returned to their families. The success of the AMBER Alert Program depends on the involvement of the entire community. The public has many ways to receive official AMBER Alerts via Radio, Television, Roadway and Digital Signage, Internet Service Providers, and through their wireless carriers.

Other ways that the public can receive official AMBER Alerts on the Internet would be through AOL, AIM, Yahoo, MSN, and MySpace.

Another option for wireless customers is to enroll in the Wireless AMBER Alerts program by visiting www.wirelessamberalerts.org or by texting the word AMBER followed by a space and their 5-digit ZIP code to 26237. Wireless AMBER Alerts is a free public service of the wireless industry, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and the United States Department of Justice.

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